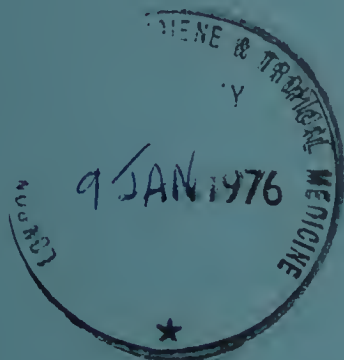


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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
MID-SUSSEX AREA

1971



RURAL DISTRICT OF CUCKFIELD

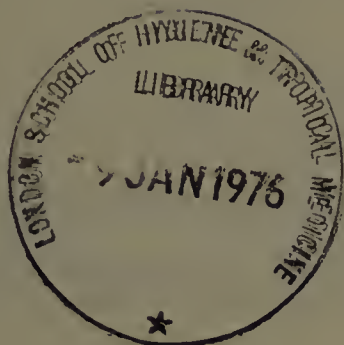
By

D. M. RICHARDSON

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., M.F.C.M., D.P.H., D.I.H.

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Charles Clarke (Haywards Heath) Ltd.

1972

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RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CUCKFIELD

REPORT

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Health Department,
Oaklands,
Haywards Heath,

Tel. No. Haywards Heath 50301

November, 1972

To the Chairman and Members of the Cuckfield Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report for the year 1971.

There was a slight fall in the corrected birth rate for the year but due to a compensatory fall in the death rate the natural increase in population for the year (72) was 7 more than that recorded in 1970.

There was again a marked fall in the infant mortality rate (6.21) as compared with the previous year and of the total deaths recorded (3) all took place during the first week of life. The still birth rate increased slightly during the year but due to the fall in the early neo-natal mortality rate, the perinatal mortality rate also fell to 14.37 as compared with 17.75 in 1970. The P.M.R. for the Mid-Sussex Area was 15.82.

Expressed as a percentage of total live births, the illegitimacy rate was 3.93 as compared with 6.96 in 1970. There were no maternal deaths during the year.

The number of deaths due to cancer of the lung and bronchus (19), representing 4.62% of total deaths, fell for the second successive year.

VACCINATION AND IMMUNISATION—MID-SUSSEX AREA

The computerisation of vaccination and immunisation records has now been completed by the County Health Department and the following figures represent the totals for children born since the 1st January, 1965, i.e. up to the age of 7 years. I understand from the County Medical Officer that as each year passes it will be possible to extend this information by a further year.

Triple Antigen:				
Primary injections	..	..	..	968
Diphtheria and Tetanus:				
Reinforcing Injections	..	..	..	1,163
Smallpox Vaccinations:				
Primary Vaccinations	..	..	..	674
Revaccinations	..	..	..	82
Poliomyelitis:				
Primary—oral vaccine	..	..	..	968
Reinforcing doses	..	..	..	1,154
Measles:				
Primary Vaccinations	..	..	..	1,115
B.C.G.	..	..	..	25

Influenza—Immunisation of Staff

In November multivalent vaccine was given to fifty-eight members of the staff.

INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATES OF VACCINATION AGAINST SMALLPOX AND CHOLERA

During the year 3,473 certificates were authenticated by the Health Department.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Two hundred and four cases of infectious disease were notified during the year and, of the total notifications received, 185 were attributed to measles, 5 to infective jaundice, 4 to food poisoning and 1 to meningitis.

Infective Jaundice

At the end of January I was informed by the Secretary of a primary school that several of the pupils were suffering from Infective Jaundice. I visited the school with the Chief Public Health Inspector and general advice was given concerning the mode of spread of the disease, particular attention being placed upon the importance of maintaining a high standard of hand hygiene amongst the children. The washrooms and toilets were inspected and arrangements made for regular spraying of W.C. cubicles including toilet seats, door handles, etc. with "Resiguard"—a compressed air spray being lent to the school for this purpose. The kitchen was also inspected and the staff alerted to the early symptoms of the disease; instructions being given to cease work if unwell.

The Headmaster was advised to inform the parents, in writing, concerning the premonitory symptoms and to suggest to them that their children should be kept at home pending the opinion of the family doctor if any suspicious symptoms should develop.

Due to the long incubation period of the disease, sporadic cases occurred until the late Spring, the hygienic precautions at the school being continued until the end of the Summer term.

Food Poisoning

(1) Salmonella Agona

The above case, a young married woman, occurred just before the Christmas holiday period in a busy hotel restaurant, in the Mid-Sussex area. Although the patient, who was employed as the Hotel Cashier, had not been directly involved in food handling, the situation was somewhat complicated by the fact that she was married to the Head Waiter and immediately prior to her illness had taken almost all her meals in the Hotel. Bacteriological screening of all the restaurant staff was carried out with negative results but it was necessary to keep the Cashier and her husband under surveillance until negative specimens were obtained from the former some four months later.

(2) Salmonellosis in Farm Animals

Several outbreaks were reported by the District Veterinary Officer. Farm workers and their families were investigated by the Public Health Department and, where necessary, specimens were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory.

(3) Investigation of Suspected Food Poisoning

On the 3rd March a telephone message was received from the Proprietor of a restaurant in the Mid-Sussex Area requesting a visit from a Public Health Inspector in connection with an alleged incident of food poisoning following a small family party at his restaurant. On enquiry the clinical picture was more indicative of virus gastroenteritis but, the consumption of tuna fish at the meal with its associated connotation in the public mind of possible *mercury poisoning, necessitated a full investigation. Stool specimens from the four victims which were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory proved, as anticipated, to be negative for pathogenic bacteria. Several tins of tuna fish were then dispatched to the Public Analyst for investigation with regard to possible metallic contamination and in due course a satisfactory report was received. The Proprietor of the restaurant was informed and it is presumed that tuna has now reappeared on the menu. **Note: An outbreak of mercury poisoning attributed to the consumption of tuna fish obtained from waters contaminated with industrial waste, was reported earlier in the year from Japan.*

Typhoid Fever

The patient, a man of 50 years, was admitted to Cuckfield Hospital with unexplained pyrexia on the 23rd July having returned home on the 9th from a motoring holiday in Spain and Portugal. *Salmonella typhi* was isolated on 26th July and the patient, who had been nursed in a side ward since the day following admission, was then transferred to Foredown Hospital. Arrangements were made for the screening of all family and nursing contacts.

Typhoid fever is an eminently preventable disease and all travellers should obtain protection against typhoid fever by immunisation before venturing abroad, including visits to continental Europe.

Sonne Dysentery

One of the above cases, the two year old child of a House Surgeon at a local hospital, would seem to have acquired the infection following the visit of a family friend from the Middle East. In view of the association with the hospital it was necessary to arrange for bacteriological screening of the whole family. Fortunately the father was found to be negative and no problems arose in regard to employment. Following successful treatment, three consecutive negative specimens were obtained from the case within a month of notification.

SWIMMING BATHS AND BATHING POOLS

There is only one public swimming pool in the area under my supervision. This open-air pool is situated in the southern half of the district. Mains water is used for filling at the beginning of the season and is treated at the pool by pressure filters, aeration and chlorination.

Samples from the above, together with those obtained from swimming pools attached to private schools, were submitted for bacteriological examination during the bathing season.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1951

Section 47:

This Section provides for the compulsory removal from their homes of elderly, infirm or incapacitated persons, who are not receiving proper care and attention. Such persons are often living on their own under poor and insanitary conditions and although it was not necessary to take formal action under this Section, several cases were investigated during the year.

W.R.V.S. MEALS ON WHEELS SERVICE

During 1971 a total of 13,040 meals was provided. Since the inception of this service in January, 1962, a total of 71,669 meals has been provided.

Great credit is due to the local W.R.V.S. for the administration and day-to-day running of this valuable service.

MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

During the year medical examinations were carried out for the following authorities :—

Cuckfield Rural District	..	..	2
Cuckfield Urban District	..	..	6
Burgess Hill Urban District	..	..	1
East Sussex County Council	..	..	100

I would like to express my thanks to Mr. Relf, Chief Public Health Inspector, for his help and co-operation in the work of the department and for the particulars which he has supplied for this report. I also wish to record my appreciation to other members of the staff for their loyal support during the year, particularly Mrs. Patten, my Secretary.

In conclusion I would like to thank members of the Council, particularly the Chairman and members of the Health and General Purposes Committee, for their support and also the officers and staff in other departments for their help during the year.

D. M. RICHARDSON,
Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

<i>Medical Officer of Health</i>	D. M. Richardson, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., M.F.C.M., D.P.H., D.I.H., F.R.I.P.H.H.
<i>(Also Medical Officer of Health to Cuckfield Urban and Burgess Hill Urban Districts and Medical Officer (part-time) to East Sussex County Council Honorary Consultant in Epidemiology and Clinical Assistant in Dermatology—Mid- Sussex Hospital Management Committee)</i>	
<i>Chief Public Health Inspector</i> ..	R. S. Relf, F.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I. <i>Qualified Inspector of Meat and Other Foods</i> <i>Qualified Housing Manager</i> <i>Qualified Building Inspector</i>
<i>Deputy Chief Public Health Inspector</i>	B. P. Darking, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I., M.R.I.P.H.H. <i>Qualified Inspector of Meat and Other Foods</i>
<i>District Public Health Inspectors</i> ..	H. Sharp, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I. <i>Qualified Inspector of Meat and Other Foods</i> R. J. Tomlin (Appointed 4.1.71) <i>Qualified Inspector of Meat and Other Foods</i> <i>Qualified Air Pollution Control Inspector</i>
<i>Secretary to the M.O.H. and Administrative Assistant</i> ..	Mrs. W. M. Patten, M.A. Med. Sec.
<i>Clerks to the M.O.H.</i>	Mrs. B. P. Westgate Miss L. Fletcher
<i>Secretary to the C.P.H.I.</i>	Miss J. M. Woodland
<i>Clerk to the C.P.H.I.</i>	Miss Y. R. M. Manning

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Summary of Statistics for the Years:

	1969	1970	1971
Area of the District in Acres	68,011	68,011	68,011
Population estimated to middle of year ..	37,810	38,960	38,820
Rateable Value	£1,370,096 (at 1.4.69)	£1,435,862 (at 1.4.70)	£1,511,757 (at 1.4.71)
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	£5,600	£5,875	£14,500
Density of Population (persons per acre) ..	0.56	0.57	0.57
Number of Houses	11,711	12,020	12,389
Birth Rate (corrected) per 1,000 population ..	13.43	14.07	13.56
Death Rate (corrected) per 1,000 population ..	8.01	9.44	8.90
Infant Mortality Rate	15.02	11.93	6.21

VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	233	231	464
Illegitimate	10	9	19
Total Live Births	243	240	483
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population (crude) ..	..	..	12.44
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population (corrected) ..	..	..	13.56
Illegitimate live births per cent. of total live births	..	..	3.93

Still Births	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Legitimate	1	2	3
Illegitimate	1	—	1
Total Still Births	2	2	4
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 (live and still births)	..	..	8.21

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Total Live and Still Births	245	242	487

Infant Deaths

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Legitimate	3	—	3
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Total	3	—	3
Infant Mortality Rates:—			
(a) All infants per 1,000 live births	..	..	6.21
(b) Legitimate infants, per 1,000 legitimate live births	..	..	6.47
(c) Illegitimate infants, per 1,000 illegitimate live births	..	..	0.00

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Legitimate	3	—	3
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Total	3	—	3
Neonatal Mortality Rate per 1,000 total live births	..	..	6.21

Deaths of Infants under 1 week of age	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Legitimate	3	—	3
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Total	3	—	3
Early Neonatal Mortality Rate per 1,000 total live births.. .. .	..	..	6.21

Perinatal Mortality	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Still Births and Deaths under 1 week	5	2	7
Perinatal Mortality Rate per 1,000 total live and still births			
(a) Cuckfield Rural	..	..	14.37
(b) Mid-Sussex Area	..	..	15.82

Maternal Mortality			
Maternal Deaths (including abortion)	..	..	Nil
Maternal Mortality Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	..	..	0.00

Deaths	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
All Causes	189	222	411
Death Rate per 1,000 of the population (crude)	..	..	10.59
Death Rate per 1,000 of the population (corrected)	..	..	8.90

TABLE SHOWING VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEARS 1957-1971

Year	Esti- mated Popula- tion	Number of Births						Birth Rate	Number of Deaths			Death Rate	Infants' Deaths			Infant Death Rate	Natural Increase of Births over Deaths
		Legitimate			Illegitimate				M	F	Total		M	F	Total		
		M	F	Total	M	F	Total										
1957	27,270	159	166	325	6	4	10	12.28	148	150	298	10.93	—	6	6	17.91	37
1958	27,880	173	202	375	14	3	17	15.46	159	181	340	9.75	4	3	7	17.85	52
1959	28,750	207	191	398	13	6	19	15.51	147	172	319	9.09	4	4	8	19.18	98
1960	29,470	237	226	463	12	4	16	17.38	162	280	442	9.51	5	1	6	12.52	37
1961	30,470	236	240	476	8	4	12	16.66	177	187	364	10.27	2	3	5	10.25	124
1962	30,770	238	240	478	10	12	22	16.90	190	190	380	10.62	8	3	11	22.00	120
1963	31,000	276	224	500	10	11	21	18.49	220	201	421	11.40	3	3	6	11.52	100
1964	33,590	272	258	530	13	7	20	18.00	164	166	330	8.24	2	4	6	10.91	220
1965	34,980	245	225	470	13	20	33	15.81	191	168	359	8.41	1	1	2	3.98	144
1966	35,470	244	205	449	14	13	27	14.76	189	187	376	8.58	2	3	5	10.50	100
1967	35,950	224	214	438	10	17	27	14.22	202	187	389	8.44	2	—	2	4.30	76
1968	37,110	229	197	426	19	8	27	13.31	216	201	417	9.67	5	3	8	17.66	36
1969	37,810	222	213	435	16	15	31	13.43	202	154	356	8.01	5	2	7	15.02	110
1970	38,960	243	225	468	13	22	35	14.07	227	211	438	9.44	2	4	6	11.93	65
1971	38,820	233	231	464	10	9	19	13.56	189	222	411	8.90	3	—	3	6.21	72

CAUSES OF DEATH IN CUCKFIELD RURAL DISTRICT

Cause of Death	Sex	Total	Under 1 Year	1- 14	15- 44	45- 64	65- 74	75 and over
Malignant neoplasm, oesophagus	M	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
	F	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Malignant neoplasm, stomach ..	M	3	—	—	—	2	1	—
	F	4	—	—	—	—	1	3
Malignant neoplasm, intestine ..	M	3	—	—	—	1	1	1
	F	12	—	—	1	2	3	6
Malignant neoplasm, larynx ..	M	4	—	—	—	1	—	3
	F	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	M	14	—	—	1	6	4	3
	F	5	—	—	—	3	1	1
Malignant neoplasm, breast ..	M	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	F	10	—	—	1	4	2	3
Malignant neoplasm, uterus ..	F	4	—	—	—	3	1	—
Malignant neoplasm, prostate ..	M	3	—	—	—	—	1	2
Leukaemia	M	3	—	—	1	1	1	—
	F	3	—	—	—	1	2	—
Other malignant neoplasms ..	M	11	—	—	1	4	1	5
	F	11	—	—	—	2	6	3
Diabetes mellitus	M	2	—	—	—	—	1	1
	F	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mental disorders	M	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	F	2	—	—	—	1	1	—
Other diseases of nervous system	M	2	—	1	—	—	1	—
	F	4	—	—	—	—	—	4
Chronic rheumatic heart disease ..	M	2	—	—	—	—	1	1
	F	4	—	—	—	—	2	2
Hypertensive disease	M	2	—	—	—	1	1	—
	F	2	—	—	—	—	—	2
Ischaemic heart disease	M	59	—	—	1	17	16	25
	F	57	—	—	—	3	13	41
Other forms of heart disease ..	M	11	—	—	—	1	4	6
	F	14	—	—	—	—	—	14
Cerebrovascular disease	M	22	—	—	1	2	8	11
	F	41	—	—	—	2	5	34
Other diseases of circulatory system	M	7	—	—	—	1	1	5
	F	11	—	—	—	—	2	9
Influenza	M	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	F	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Pneumonia	M	14	—	—	—	2	3	9
	F	13	—	—	—	—	3	10
Bronchitis and emphysema ..	M	5	—	—	—	—	2	3
	F	2	—	—	—	—	1	1
Asthma	M	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
	F	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
Other diseases of respiratory system	M	4	—	—	—	—	1	3
	F	3	—	—	—	—	1	2
Intestinal obstruction and hernia	M	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	F	1	—	—	—	—	1	—

continued on next page

CAUSES OF DEATH IN CUCKFIELD RURAL DISTRICT

Other diseases of digestive system	M	2	—	—	—	—	—	2
	F	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Other diseases, genito-urinary system	M	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
	F	3	—	—	—	1	—	2
Congenital anomalies	M	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	F	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
Other causes of perinatal mortality	M	3	3	—	—	—	—	—
	F	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Symptoms and ill-defined conditions	M	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	F	2	—	—	—	—	—	2
Motor vehicle accidents	M	3	—	—	—	—	1	1
	F	2	—	—	1	1	—	—
All other accidents	M	4	—	1	1	2	1	—
	F	3	—	—	—	—	1	2
Suicide and self-inflicted injuries	M	3	—	—	—	2	—	—
	F	3	—	—	1	—	1	—
All other external causes	M	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
	F	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Totals	M—189 F—222	411	3	3	14	66	97	228

MAIN CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE CUCKFIELD RURAL DISTRICT

	1970	1971
(i) Diseases of the heart and circulatory system (Ischaemic disease)	170 (38.81%) 106 (24.20%)	169 (41.12%) 116 (28.22%)
(ii) Cancer (all sites) (Cancer of Lung and Bronchus)	83 (18.95%) 24 (5.48%)	86 (20.92%) 19 (4.62%)
(iii) Cerebrovascular disease	56 (12.79%)	63 (15.33%)
(iv) Respiratory diseases (including tuberculosis and influenza) (Respiratory tuberculosis)	77 (17.58%) Nil	44 (10.71%) Nil

CAUSE OF DEATH IN INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR

	<i>Cause</i>	<i>Age</i>
1. Prematurity		1 hour
2. Respiratory Distress. Prematurity		5 hours
3. Respiratory Distress. Prematurity		6 hours

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA

Laboratory Facilities

The following Laboratories are utilised for the examination of specimens :

Public Health Laboratory, Brighton
Cuckfield Hospital Laboratory
Public Analyst's Laboratory at Lewes

I would like to express my thanks to the Directors of the above Laboratories for their assistance, particularly Dr. J. E. Jameson, of the Brighton Public Health Laboratory, for his helpful advice on many occasions.

Ambulance Facilities

Cases of infectious disease are removed by one of the East Sussex County Council's ambulances stationed at Haywards Heath or Burgess Hill Ambulance Station.

Hospital Accommodation for Infectious Diseases

Beds are available at Foredown Hospital, Portslade, for observation and/or treatment of cases of infectious disease.

A table on page 16 gives particulars of admissions during the year.

Smallpox

The South-East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board state that cases of smallpox occurring in this district should be sent to the River Hospitals (Long Reach), Dartford, Kent.

CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES

Child Health Clinics:

Ardingly	..	..	Hapstead Hall	1st Thursday 2.30-4 p.m.
Balcombe	..	..	Church Hall	3rd Wednesday 2.30-4 p.m.
Bolney	..	..	Rawson Institute	4th Friday 2-4 p.m.
Copthorne	..	..	Village Hall	1st and 3rd Tuesday 2-4 p.m. Dr. each session
Crawley Down	..	..	Village Hall	2nd and 4th Tuesday 2.15-4 p.m. Dr. on 2nd Tuesday
Horsted Keynes	..	..	Congregational Hall	3rd Friday 2 p.m.
Hurstpierpoint	..	..	Methodist Hall	1st Wednesday 2-4 p.m. 3rd Wednesday 2-4 p.m. Dr. each session
Keymer	..	..	Congregational Church Hall, Hassocks	2nd and 4th Monday 2-4 p.m.
Slaugham	..	..	Village Hall, Handcross	3rd Monday 2.15-4 p.m.
West Hoathly	..	..	Village Hall	1st Tuesday 2-4 p.m.
Lindfield	..	..	Congregational Hall	1st and 3rd Tuesday 2.30-4 p.m. Dr. each session

Clinics:

Chest	..	..	..	Haywards Heath Hospital	Every Thursday 9.30 a.m. (by appointment)
				Cuckfield Hospital	Thursday 2 p.m. Diagnostic

Orthopaedic	..	B.R.C.S. (H.Q.), Paddockhall Road, Haywards Heath	<i>Orthopaedist :</i> 2nd Tuesday 10.30 a.m.-1 p.m. <i>Physiotherapist :</i> Tuesday 10.30 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday 9.30 a.m.-1 p.m. 2-4.30 p.m.
Speech Therapy	..	E.S.C.C. Clinic, Oaklands, Haywards Heath	Tuesday 9.15 a.m.-12.15 p.m. (by appointment)
		E.S.C.C. Clinic, Mill Road, Burgess Hill	Monday 1.30-3 p.m. (by appointment)
		E.S.C.C. Clinic, Royal George Road, Burgess Hill	Tuesday 1-3 p.m. (by appointment)
Child Guidance	..	East Grinstead : Moat Road	Every Thursday (by appointment)
		Lewes : Castlegate House	Every Wednesday (by appointment)
		Portslade : Old Shoreham Road	Tuesday morning Thursday (by appointment)
		Burgess Hill : E.S.C.C. Clinic, Mill Road	Every Friday (by appointment)
		Crowborough : Mead House, Beacon Road	Every Tuesday (by appointment)
Eye Refractions (School Children)	..	Haywards Heath Hospital	Every Friday morning (by appointment)
		Morley Street Clinic, Brighton	Alternate Thursday mornings (by appointment)
Dental	..	Haywards Heath : E.S.C.C. Clinic, Oaklands	By appointment
		Burgess Hill : E.S.C.C. Clinic, Royal George Road	By appointment
		East Grinstead : County Dental Clinic, Moat Road	By appointment
Minor Ailments	..	E.S.C.C. Clinic, Oaklands, Haywards Heath	As required

Cancer Prevention ..	Haywards Heath: E.S.C.C. Clinic, Oaklands	Tuesday evenings and Wednesday mornings as necessary (by appointment)
	Burgess Hill: E.S.C.C. Clinic, Mill Road E.S.C.C. Clinic, Royal George Road	Tuesday mornings and Thursday evenings as necessary (by appointment) Wednesday mornings and evenings as necessary (by appointment)
	East Grinstead: Moat Road	Wednesday mornings and evenings as necessary (by appointment)
*Family Planning ..	E.S.C.C. Clinic, Oaklands, Haywards Heath	Every Wednesday 2-4 p.m. Dr. each session (by appointment)

* These Clinics are provided by the Family Planning Association

Venereal Diseases ..	Facilities available at Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton						
Women ..	Tuesday	..	4-7 p.m.				
	Thursday	..	10 a.m.-1 p.m.				
Men ..	Monday	..	4-7 p.m.				
	Wednesday	..	10 a.m.-1 p.m.				
	Thursday	..	2-5 p.m.				
Men and Women ..	Friday	..	11 a.m.				
			Urgent cases only				
			(By appointment direct to V.D. Clinic)				
			New patients must attend 1 hour before clinic closes				

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE IN AGE GROUPS

Disease	Total	Under 1 year	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-24	Over 25
Meningitis	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
Food Poisoning	4	1	—	—	—	1	2
Infective Jaundice	5	—	—	—	1	1	3
Scarlet Fever	9	—	1	6	2	—	—
Measles	185	5	89	78	12	1	—
Totals ..	204	6	90	84	16	3	5

COMPARATIVE TUBERCULOSIS STATISTICS

Year	New Cases						Deaths						Number on Register at end of Year					
	Respiratory			Non-Respiratory			Respiratory			Non-Respiratory			Respiratory			Non-Respiratory		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
1948	12	9	21	2	2	4	7	5	12	-	1	1	59	51	110	27	34	61
1958	8	5	13	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	94	71	165	10	12	22
1959	6	1	7	1	-	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	96	70	166	11	13	24
1960	3	4	7	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	95	76	171	11	11	22
1961	5	1	6	1	-	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	97	74	171	12	11	23
1962	2	4	6	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	96	77	173	11	12	23
1963	3	5	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	96	75	171	9	10	19
1964	2	1	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	89	61	150	7	11	18
1965	5	1	6	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	89	65	154	7	11	18
1966	3	1	4	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	87	62	149	7	11	18
1967	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	82	54	136	6	11	17
1968	4	2	6	1	1	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	84	57	141	7	12	19
1969	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	57	137	6	11	17
1970	1	-	1	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	61	40	101	3	8	11
1971	1	1	*2	-	1	†1	-	-	-	-	-	-	62	39	101	3	9	12

*Male aged 28 and Female aged 63. †Female aged 10

FOREDOWN HOSPITAL, PORTSLADE

Eighteen cases were admitted to hospital from the Mid-Sussex area for observation and/or treatment in connection with known or suspected, infectious diseases:—

Disease							Number of Admissions
Typhoid Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Food Poisoning	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Gastro-enteritis	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Colitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Virus Meningitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Quinsy	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Throat Infection	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Glandular Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Observation Glandular Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Infective Jaundice	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Cow-Pox Infection	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Herpes Zoster and Broncho-Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Skin Infection	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Post-Operative Cancer of Bladder	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Pyrexia of Uncertain Origin	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Total							18

REPORT OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR ON THE SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Mr. R. S. Relf, Chief Public Health Inspector, has furnished the following report on the sanitary supervision of the district.

GENERALLY

Since 1969, the work of the Department has been within the oversight of two Committees—"Health and General Purposes" and "Housing," and matter has accordingly been so allocated, after comments on staff matters which, of course, affect both Committees.

Items required to be included by virtue of DoE Circular 1/72 are indicated by reference, in brackets, after each heading.

STAFF

1971 was unique, in recent years, in that the establishment was up to full strength for the whole year; this was to last for only one month into 1972 when a District Inspector post became vacant and which will probably remain unfilled for the rest of the year. The absence of one inspector (representing 25% of the professional staff), as has been mentioned in past reports, is a particularly serious matter for a relatively small Department which regularly has to cope with new legislation, often involved—and a considerable, growth rate of population—on the same establishment figure as obtained in the immediate post war period.

A certain amount of the "backlog" of past years was reduced, and it was gratifying that the whole area had a covering District Inspector to deal, expeditiously, with the many and varied day to day calls for assistance. Particular emphasis was paid to food hygiene duties which had been rather neglected of late, something that caused rather more verbal representations to be made at the time of visit than usually obtains.

Continuity of staff employment is probably more important in a rural area than elsewhere since the more distant locations of potential sources of trouble frequently have special aspects in which past background knowledge is almost indispensable. For this reason, I have every reason to appreciate, in particular, the efforts of those members of the staff who have been with us for several years.

A. HEALTH AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE **Water Supply (5 (1))**

Over 99% of houses and shops are connected to the public main or private service, and the following table indicates the position, on a parish basis.

Parish	No. of Premises	Premises with piped supply	
		No.	Estimated population
Albourne	227	225	734
Ardingly	537	537	1848
Balcombe	599	595	1962
Bolney	405	403	1361
Clayton	650	650	2445
Cuckfield Rural	797	794	2316
Fulking	114	103	351
Horsted Keynes	494	494	1436
Hurstpierpoint	2044	2036	6914
Keymer	2175	2175	6741
Lindfield Rural	697	697	2362
Newtimber	43	43	153
Poynings	111	109	326
Pyecombe	90	90	388
Slaugham	724	721	2094
Twineham	91	91	290
West Hoathly	619	619	2339
Worth	2377	2352	6859
Total ..	12794	12734	40919

In addition to routine sampling undertaken, on a random location basis, by the Department, each of the Water Undertakings maintain a regular sampling routine, particularly at source. Quality has been satisfactory, and no evidence of shortage has come to light. Plumbo solvency is not a local problem.

As in previous years the only complaints received have been in respect of sediment which, investigation has evinced, has been due to flushing of mains or use by the fire authorities. Regarding the former, a little more effort in regard to "public relationship" (for instance comment in press of areas likely to be affected during a particular period) would, perhaps, be of advantage to all concerned.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal (6)

Arrangements for sewerage and sewage disposal in the district are "reasonably adequate" at least, most premises in hamlet units and larger having a water borne system and a proper disposal unit. Exceptions that occasion some concern are in the Valebridge Road area of Burgess Hill (three local authorities—two of which will merge in 1974—are affected; an obvious boundary revision may also then be arranged) and at Tyes Cross, in West Hoathly Parish.

A cesspool emptying service (managed by the Engineer) is provided in respect of outlying premises, but although the number of premises with cesspools has been considerably reduced in recent years—partly due to the department's improvement grant programme—the load on cesspools tends to increase thus, to some extent, offsetting an expected reduction in the demand for this service.

Common Lodging Houses (7)

There are no common lodging houses in the district ; not surprising in the relatively " well off " South East.

SERVICES UNDER THE FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955 (9)

(a) Milk Supplies—Brucella Abortus

34 samples of raw milk were examined ; all being negative no further action was called for. At the time of sampling, and where appropriate, advice on preventative measures is given, although the eradication scheme appears to be well under way and, in due course, this disease—like tuberculosis—may become little more than a memory.

Penicillin screening—a routine investigation—was also negative in each case.

(b) Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1970

The undermentioned table, suitably updated from the last full survey position, indicates number and classification of concerned food premises.

Type of Premises	Total No.
Catering Establishments	78
Schools (Private and State) .. .	31
Grocers' Shops .. .	67
Sweet Shops .. .	18
Butchers' Shops .. .	17
Greengrocers' Shops .. .	11
Confectioners' Shops .. .	10
Wet Fish Shops .. .	3
Fried Fish Shops .. .	2
Mobile Fish Shops .. .	1
Mobile Fried Fish Shops .. .	1
Wholesale Stores .. .	2
Total ..	241

(119 premises were registered for the sale of wrapped ice-cream (there are no manufacturing premises) whilst 9 rooms were registered for sausage preparation, 5 for cooking of food and 1 for brining/pickling of meat).

Most of these premises were visited during the year, and bearing in mind that the housewife plays a useful part in encouraging proprietors to " glamourise " their premises—if they want trade—rather too many adverse comments on obvious short-comings were called for. (Subsequent revisits in the two manned districts have shown a marked improvement ; the relative situation in the other district cannot, unfortunately, be properly evaluated). One appreciates that keeping track on the ever changing legislative standards is not easy, even for a specialist inspector, but as, in the main, these are based on common sense, some proprietors do seem to lack the ability to instill this in subordinate staff. The often considerable turn-over of staff is usually advanced in mitigation, and from our own experience there is much in this argument, although the old adage " ignorance of the law . . . " still applies.

(c) Poultry Inspection

Because of centralisation schemes there are now only three specific poultry processing premises within the district, and some 74 visits were made thereto. Something of the order of 16,000 birds (mainly hens, broilers and capons—with a decreasing number of turkeys) were processed. Liaison has been established with the managements and—it being quite impracticable to maintain a normal inspection service to cover the largely haphazard times of slaughter—the spotter system is employed. No “doubtful” case was referred to the Department during the year, and chance inspections revealed a reasonable inspection pattern being maintained.

The problem premises are those used only occasionally—usually during the pre-Christmas period and, where fronting on main roads, at week-ends. Here one has to employ a degree of common sense, since it would be unreasonable to expect a standard commensurate with a fully utilised food factory. The public is entitled to expect a hygienically produced article and so even the small producer must adhere to reasonable standards.

There are, of course, in this farming area a considerable number of broiler birds produced, but it so happens that the slaughtering establishments (for these and redundant hens) are situate outside the district. On the other hand we have a large scale hatchery unit but, as hygiene standards here are reminiscent of an operating theatre, no trouble is experienced in this connection.

(d) Generally

There was no need for statutory condemnation of food during the year, although the voluntary surrender of the undermentioned foodstuffs was accepted:

<i>Source</i>	<i>Article</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Containers</i>
From Wholesale Stores:	Canned Fruit	662lbs.	432 tins
		—	570 tins
		—	185 cases
	Canned Vegetables	1670lbs.	110 tins
		—	25 cases
	Canned Meat	911lbs.	242 tins
From Retail Stores:	Meat	1377lbs.	—
	Fish	42lbs.	—
	Canned Fruit	124lbs.	110 tins
	Canned Vegetables	4lbs.	4 tins
	Canned Meat	59lbs.	8 tins
	Meat	109lbs.	—
From Mixed Premises:	Fish	255lbs.	—
	Potatoes	—	131 bags
	Frozen Food	—	546 pkts.
	Ice Cream	—	325 pkts.

There are no operative slaughterhouses within the district, so that checks are limited to routine visits, in respect of hygiene and “offices” purpose, to retail outlets.

Containerisation has continued to have a potential rather than real significance and has, in the event, been relatively easy to cope with. The reported use of an " ex-turkey " cold store for this purpose turned out to be a false alarm, the premises being only temporarily used by a large meat wholesaling firm whose own premises suffered a major mechanical breakdown. Local " environmentalists " (mainly concerned at the use of narrow country lanes by huge continental articulated lorries) reported the arrival of one large vehicle, but this (and a subsequent one) was found to be covered by an Inspection Certificate from a recognised entry terminal.

Catering establishments in a rural district such as this are situated either in the larger villages or by the side of trunk roads and are inclined to cater for different classes of customers. Although commercial drivers tend to be rather uncomplaining—so far as food hygiene is concerned anyway—transport cafes obviously need more frequent visits than premises which boast in season floral decorations on their tables. Proprietors of these often have be to handled with care, hence the emphasis on helpful advice rather than the quotation of some obscure subsection of an Act !

Schools, both private and local authority, Homes for the Elderly or Infirm, and the various types of Clubs all normally have to comply with current hygiene and other legislation—as of course do Public Houses not within the normal " catering establishment " category, and these have to be visited as occasion allows.

INFORMATION REQUIRED UNDER THE FACTORIES ACT 1961 (10)

Tables, in the form of Appendix II, are as follows:

(a) INSPECTION FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISIONS AS TO HEALTH

Premises	No. on Register	Number of		
		Inspec- tions	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	3	3	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	98	24	4	—
(iii) Other premises in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Totals . .	101	27	4	—

(b) CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	5	5	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ..	1	1	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S.7) ..					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ..	2	2	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ..	8	8	—	—	—

(There were only 13 outworkers listed on 1st August with no known cases of default, or other need for prosecution).

Generally, premises visited appeared to be carrying out relevant requirements, and such minor infringements reported on verbally had been dealt with by the time of revisiting.

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

The purpose of this Act was to bring these premises, basically, under a similar control to that relevant to factories and workplaces. Fortunately this district does not have the “bad” premises that precipitated action by the sponsors of the Act but, nevertheless, the somewhat complicated codes of practice apply to even “good” premises and therefore have to be administered—to a large extent by the local authorities.

The full establishment enabled a “drive” to be undertaken and 160 visits (compared with only 26 the previous year) made. As in the food hygiene field, the return to understaffing in 1972 prevented this momentum being maintained.

Statistics required by the Act are as follows :—

Class of Premises	No. of premises newly registered during the year	Total number of registered premises at end of year	No. of registered premises receiving one or more general inspections during the year
Offices	1	48	3
Retail shops	1	119	111
Wholesale shops, warehouses	—	3	1
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens ..	—	24	24
Fuel storage depots	—	5	—
Totals ..	2	199	139

Analysis of Persons Employed in registered premises by workplace

<i>Class of workplace</i>	<i>Number of persons employed</i>
Offices	344
Retail Shops	385
Wholesale departments, warehouses ..	45
Catering establishments open to the public	148
Canteens	24
Fuel storage depots	16
	962

Information not required on statutory form

INFESTATION CONTROL

(a) Rodents

Since war time requirements first necessitated positive action to reduce the rodent population, this Council has employed the same rodent operative, and who, with the passing of the years, became very knowledgeable in his trade and was well liked by the public. In December he retired, having given conscientious service to the Department, but at the year end a replacement had not been found. (Because of the inevitable delay in issuing Annual Reports, it is of interest to record that it was not found possible to obtain a replacement operative, and that from 1st February, 1972, a well known specialist firm undertook treatment of the Council's own premises and also private dwellings. Trade premises are no longer treated—even at a charge—by a Council controlled service.)

For statistical reasons the usual summary is included as follows :—

Private Dwellings :

No. of dwellings surveyed, or visited as a result of notification	407
No. of dwellings where treatment was carried out	344
Total number of treatments carried out to private dwellings	381
Total number of visits to private dwellings	1546

Business Premises :

No. of food shops surveyed, or visited as a result of notification	13
No. of food shops where treatment was carried out	11
No. of catering establishments (including hotels and schools) surveyed, or visited as a result of notification	27
No. of catering establishments where treatment was carried out ..	24
No. of other premises surveyed, or visited as a result of notification ..	11
No. of other premises where treatment was carried out	9
No. of farms surveyed, or visited as a result of notification	42
No. of farms where infestations were found :	
In survey	10
By notification	6
	} 16
No. of farms where treatment was carried out	6
Total number of treatments carried out at business premises	49
Total number of visits to business premises	279

Council Property (Sewage Works, Refuse Tips, etc.)

Total number of visits	234
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(b) Other Pests

Because of the retirement of the Rodent Operative, 1971 will be the last year in which we shall be able, physically, to carry out eradication work as of routine.

In addition to responding to the frequent requests for advice, thirty premises received something approaching a major treatment during the year (13 for cluster type flies, 3 for cockroaches, 7 for ants and 7 for fleas).

Generalising in the last report, I commented on the important impact made, since the war, by the new generation (for instance D.D.T.) of insecticides, but towards the end of the year there appeared an upsurge in flea complaints—usually attributed to pets—and in many cases suitable materials (with appropriate advice) were supplied, in addition to the treatment of major infestations carried out by the staff.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Although Parish Councils normally maintain these, probably the most used are those adjacent to two Inn/Refreshment Houses situated, one in the extreme North, and the other in the extreme South, of the district. The few complaints received tended to be in respect of these which are subject to enormous pressures for often relatively short periods, hence the difficulty of their being maintained at all times in a clean and tidy state. Regular visits during the year kept the problem to reasonable limits.

HAIRDRESSER'S ESTABLISHMENTS

There are twelve permanent establishments (small village trade) and one mobile operative, and no problem came to light during the year in respect of compliance with the Council's Byelaws.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS (WASTE FOOD) ORDER 1957

The cooking of swill, a requirement of this order, is an offensive affair, but no doubt because of location away from centres of population, no complaints were received during the year and no case of non-compliance noted during visits.

ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT, 1963

This Act, initiated primarily because of unsatisfactory usage in more densely populated areas, causes little trouble in this area and inspections of the 11 licensed premises failed to reveal contraventions. Such complaints as were received were, in the main, in respect of barking by dogs; something that has to be dealt with under other legislation or, more usually, under common law processes.

CLEAN AIR ACTS

Formal applications for "prior approval" received during the year were dealt with at officer level and occasioned no problem.

The public is becoming increasingly unable to tolerate smoke from garden bonfires and when the district is adequately provided with "places" where residents can conveniently deposit burnable and other waste matter (a requirement of the Civic Amenities Act) there will be little excuse for this—usually un-neighbourly—practice. Much time (because of the wide area to be covered) is spent on investigating these complaints and it is to be regretted that frequently, by the time an Inspector is available and able to visit, smoke is either of little consequence or, indeed, non-existent.

INFECTIOUS AND FOOD BORNE DISEASES

Of necessity this subject must be accorded priority treatment—prevention being better (and easier usually) than cure. Most of the work appears to have no end product, but this is as it should be. The advent of air travel—particularly the increasing use of package holiday schemes—has increased the scope of preventative work, and a considerable mileage is built up merely to ensure that contacts of subsequently ascertained cases of infectious disease (smallpox, cholera and the like) are made aware of the circumstances and the physical manifestations to be looked for during the appropriate incubation periods. With the new types of aircraft, Hong Kong (for example) is only just "round the corner" these days.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS. (Planning Committee)

Having (if necessary) obtained permission, under the provision of the Planning Acts (in respect of which the Council has delegated powers), as a caravan site, a Site Licence must be obtained from the local authority (in its own right) as required by the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. Recommendations in respect of conditions are made jointly by the Engineer and Surveyor and the C.P.H.I. and are based on the Model Code suggestions. Licences are not necessary in certain circumstances, the most important being if the use is incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse within which curtilage it is stationed. The Council does not operate a Site other than the one provided by the County Council for the basically nomadic type of family. The largest site, in the North of the district, is, in extent a village, with water, electricity and waterborne drainage available and used by all permanent caravans (a term which includes, in practice, spacious and well appointed chalets). Periodical visits must, of course, be made to all licensed sites to confirm compliance with the conditions.

PETROLEUM STORAGE

There are nearly one hundred premises licensed to store petroleum spirit, some 255,000 gallons in two hundred tanks being involved. The majority of the tanks now come within the routine test programme (most requiring bi-annual attention) so this in itself is quite a formidable task when added to all the routine matters which, in the interest of public safety, ought to be subject to frequent checking. This work has unavoidably had to be neglected of late by reason of staff shortage coinciding with a heavy influx of other work, but all active day to day matters have been attended to and, of course, all structural operations carefully evaluated and supervised.

ARDINGLY SHOWGROUND

This continues to be well managed and the main South of England Show, as well as those minor functions visited, passed off without any difficulty. Mass catering is always a potential cause of trouble, and therefore early contact is made with those concerned, to try to anticipate likely problems. Although caravan type toilets are still used, more permanent facilities are being provided and the event continues to attract visitors from a wide area.

COMPLAINTS

In addition to the regular complaints received in respect of foodstuffs (mentioned later) and the 381 complaints of rats and mice infestations, 45 complaints were found to be worthy of recording as substantiated. A great number of complaints are received from callers and via the telephone—as well as during routine visits in other connections—which are too trivial to merit action, or matters not within our jurisdiction. Wasp nests are an example; although undoubtedly these can be a “nuisance” to persons at risk of being stung, there is no real public health significance, and because our rodent operative is fully occupied in covering this large area, we have never undertaken wasp destruction on a regular basis. Complainants frequently point out that some adjoining authorities do treat—at a charge—but these are much smaller and with the same sole operative establishment as ourselves, possibly have spare potential that can be utilised on a rechargeable basis, which is a common sense arrangement.

Foodstuffs

Although many complaints were investigated, it was not found necessary, during the year, to refer any case to the Committee for a decision.

In practically every case an appropriate informal representation was made to the relevant person/firm, and the matter discussed with a suitable representative. Where it was a case of an unavoidable and minor infringement the complainant was given the opportunity of expressing a wish to be a witness in a possible prosecution, but in every case he or she appreciated the reasons—including the distinct possibility of an unsuccessful conclusion—for taking informal, rather than formal, action.

Occasionally a tiny piece of thread from a sack of flour turns up in bread, despite the use of sieves; a small dark discolouration visible in white bread is often traced to grease from a bearing in the dough making machine. “A piece of glass in a slice of bread and butter”—not a trivial matter—might have been in the substance of the bread, or it might have been in the packet of butter; equally it might have come from the glass butter container and, since this was in a somewhat chipped condition, the latter was decided as being the most likely source of the trouble and so no action was taken against either supplier.

Dirty milk bottles are frequently produced at our office, but as the offence takes place where milk is placed in the bottle—which should be clean before being filled—we ourselves cannot take action if (as invariably happens) the bottling establishment is outside of the District. Despite strict supervision of highly sophisticated bottle washing plant, some unclean bottles, or bottles containing foreign matter—including paint and heavy lubrication oil—do reach the public; the surprising thing, bearing in mind the millions dealt with daily by the trade, is that the number reported is so low.

Stale food is nearly always a problem to resolve as it is often difficult to decide, in a suitable case, against whom to proceed. There has been a slight improvement noticed in stock rotation routine, although far too many quite senior food handlers possess an inadequate appreciation that the shelf-life of certain products is extremely short—measured in days in fact. In this regard the larger shop has an advantage in that, with only a small reduction in price, most products can quickly be disposed of.

Premises in respect of which reports were submitted to the Committee included:

(a) A supermarket of recent construction where fan noise gave rise to extensive complaints from adjoining dwellinghouses. This was dealt with informally, the firm spending well over £1,000 on remedial measures which affected an improvement.

(b) A light engineering firm, in the centre of a village, gave rise to a petition signed by many persons who could not possibly have been affected. Frequent visits during working hours resulted in more care being taken and so the noise was kept to reasonable levels. Had the firm been permitted to rebuild with traditional materials a further improvement would have been effected since corrugated iron does little to attenuate noise, and indeed can even make it more unpleasant.

(c) A farm at which was built an oil fired drying plant to cope with grass, subsequently used this in the winter to dry dung which, in the form of a powder was packed in plastic bags, and sold. This gave rise to problems, depending on wind direction, to one adjoining house, and when dung was in addition, brought in from outside sources, complaints became more numerous. Cyclones were installed to prevent or materially reduce the emission of dust, which of course consisted of the article to be sold, and an arrangement made whereby the proprietor undertook not to operate the plant in time of unsuitable wind direction or to shut it down if a wind change caused trouble. To this he has adhered so far, but residents in the hamlet, somewhat understandably, will only be satisfied if and when the plant is closed and dismantled.

(d) The poultry farm which, on and off, and in a variety of ways has initiated very bitter complaint indeed, finally ceased operations on an injunction being granted on the application of private persons. Under legislation available to us the best we could do was to "contain" matters by informal and statutory notice means, and this case highlights the problems faced by a Council—including a "best practicable means" potential defence—which are not relevant with the common law method of approach. The public at large is usually unwilling to take private action which, in many cases, has a far stronger chance of success than action a Council can take under normal public health legislation.

(e) The tarmacadam plant continued to breed a smouldering resentment amongst residents of nearby houses, who thought it should have been located somewhere else in the first place. (A reasoning invariably advanced, for instance, when the site of a potential itinerant caravan site is under consideration.) The firm, naturally, endeavoured to use the best practicable

means to reduce the emission of fine dust, but with this activity finally coming within the province of H.M. Alkali Inspectorate a quite different set of rules obtain, basically almost of a "prior approval" character. To cope with the expanding demand, a major increase in through-put necessitated a duplication of equipment, but this will have to be agreed with the District Inspector before being put into operation.

Generally

A considerable amount of effort (in frequency of visits) and thought (in checking with statutes to see just what power is available) has to be allocated to the heading of "complaints". Only a very small proportion of these are referred to a Committee although elected representatives often ask for situation reports and indeed bring some matters requiring attention to light. Time and availability of space precludes a more detailed analysis of problems encountered.

B. HOUSING COMMITTEE

Rent Control

Until the coming into operation of the Housing Act, 1969, the main aspect under this head to concern the Department was to process applications for Certificates of Disrepair and to deal with the subsequent stages until finally cancelled. (One such Certificate was issued during the year).

The Qualification Certificate procedure placed a new workload on the Department and Circular 79/70 admits that the provisions of Part III of the Act "are complicated and the statutory procedures to be followed are lengthy". In dealing with the twenty-nine applications received (which is done under delegated powers) a considerable amount of time has had to be expended, and the fact that the normal professional advisers seem to have little idea of requirements has not helped.

Unfit Houses

In one respect a rural district was fortunate in being required to carry out the post war Housing Survey since houses then unfit became positively identified and could be dealt with. As a result, and based on that Survey, it is known that the district no longer has a "slum" or a "twilight area" problem such as still obtains in the larger and industrialised urban areas. Of course houses, like anything else, deteriorate with the passage of time and a fresh survey might reveal further houses that, primarily through lack of essential maintenance, may well no longer be fit for human habitation and, if the cost of repairs should be unreasonable, merits formal demolition or similar action.

It has long been the policy of the Department, if practicable, to concentrate on the rehabilitation of basically sound houses, and in this connection—particularly now that, within limits, repair and replacement items are grant aidable—the house improvement scheme has saved literally hundreds of houses which otherwise might have required demolition.

One is often told by a tenant anxious to be rehoused that a house has been "condemned" (something not confirmed by records) or that it ought to be "condemned" but the truth is that to be legally unfit certain conditions must be satisfied. With the current shortage of houses locally, and the astronomical prices both asked and willingly paid, it is not difficult in most cases to find someone not only willing but anxious to rehabilitate. (Numerous grant improved houses alone testify to this submission.)

House Improvement Scheme

Most of the Department's work is of an "out of sight" nature. With the grant scheme there is a visible end product for all to see, and satisfaction felt by those concerned therewith.

The impact of the 1969 Act can now be evaluated, and can be held to have been of great importance in arresting the premature decline in housing standards. The one aspect which particularly worries many elected representatives—and others—is the removal of all conditions, in particular the one requiring repayment of a proportion of the grant if sold within a certain period of completion. (Originally twenty, but later three years). The Secretary of State remains adamant on this point; so far as he—and in consequence the Department—is concerned, a house has been brought up to standard, perhaps even saved, and in any event only a handful of speculators, overall, have gained. (We have been fortunate in this connection and, as an example, two cottages in a pretty Downland village were turned from absolute eyesores into two very attractive cottages that harmonise into the background, and work was in no way "skimped" in the interest of the profit motive.)

The new scheme is more time consuming than the old "£400" one quite apart from the increased maximum figure of £1,000 that is now allowable in the normal case. The figure for repair cost must now be carefully "vetted" and the scope of the Act has been considerably increased. Because an authority can, within reason, grant aid any improvement, much pressure is put upon the officer administering the scheme by some applicants who quote Ministry press advertisements, alleged rulings given at Ministry sponsored meetings, and even (often quite out of context) passages from the Act or relevant circulars. Whilst the pointing out that implementation is entirely at the discretion of the particular authority ought to calm down all but the most persistent would be applicant, it is necessary for the officer to have a pretty good idea of his Committee's likes and dislikes so that his opinion is based on reasonably firm ground. A ratepayer, like anyone else, is entitled to the benefit of the doubt, so that, where necessary, a policy decision (something akin to the "outline" procedure in the Planning field) is always sought before the applicant undertakes the relatively complicated submission of necessary documents to support a firm application. If the answer is "No" little time has been wasted (sometimes very relevant in view of the rapid rise in building costs) and if "yes", then only appropriate recommendations as to the recommended approved expense requires serious consideration.

Because in nearly every case additional works can legitimately be subsidised, Standard Grant applications are not encouraged. Two standard grants (one in 1970) were paid during the year, £191 being involved.

Notwithstanding that, because of the rather critical staff position, the improvement scheme has not been actively fostered, the rate of applications continues to increase. 65 grants were approved during the year compared with 55 in 1970 and 35 in 1969; £36,824 (£29,395 in 1970) being involved. Payments actually released during the year totalled £25,101 (£19,250 in 1970) in respect of 47 properties (as in 1970) bringing the accumulated total to £338,405—plus £9,487 in respect of Standard Grants. The accumulated total of grants approved was, at the year end, 1,197 and 96 respectively.

As far as can be judged there may well be something like one thousand properties still without all amenities (the information on the recent Census result also suggests this). Some of these will be improved without grant aid and, now that grants are given for work not including a standard amenity (for instance provision, for the first time, of a damp proof course), not less than this number of applications may well be received in the future.

